Waving The Yellow Flag in California

By JOHN B. WALLACE

The Truth About the Japanese in California Told by a Former Newspaper Man Who Has Lived in the State for Many Years and Who Is Now an Orange Grower in Southern California

Reprinted From
THE DEARBORN INDEPENDENT
Mr. Henry Ford's International Weekly

=Dearborn? Mich.?=
=1920?=

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By **John B. Wallace**

THIS SEEMS TO BE THE OPEN SEASON for perils and menaces. With all the perils and menaces now threatening our devoted country not from without but within, it certainly looks like rocky sailing for our Ship of State. A strange thing about these menaces and perils is that they seem to run to colors. Hardly has one of our Southern brethren been persuaded to resume his seat after declaiming the dreadful menace of the black when up pops a brother from the East or Middle West and raves about the red. And now out here on the Pacific Coast we have discovered a new peril. It's a yellow one this time. And most appropriately it is the yellow press that has done the most to advertise this latest menace to our national peace and vegetable gardens.

Another peculiar thing about these perils is that we have seemed to invite them upon ourselves. We throw our doors wide open, invite in the oppressed peoples of the world and then, after they have with great enthusiasm availed themselves of the invitation, we hastily cast about for means to kick them out. Of course we didn't invite the Negroes to this country. We brought them over—rather forced our hospitality upon them, as it were. And the reds—we found one bunch of reds already in possession of the country. What we didn't swap away from them with beads and bad whiskey, we took by force and then herded what reds had survived the whiskey and buckshot on to reservations.

Perils and Perils.

The reds who are causing us annoyance now were originally whites, but underfeeding and overtalking gave them their present complexion. Short rations and an indigestible mental diet are apt to have that effect.

It is a comparatively easy thing to dispose of the black menace and the red peril.

But our yellow peril out on the Pacific Coast is indeed a peril of another color. We are not dealing with ignorant Negroes or half-starved, half-baked theorists from darkest Europe. The Japanese are a race every whit as proud and sensitive as our own—a race that considers itself to be just as good if not better than any nation on earth. And what is more to the point it is a nation that is ready to back its claims with several million trained soldiers and a big fleet of modern warships.

Once before we had an incipient yellow peril out on the Pacific Coast. A bunch of Chinamen had the nerve to think they could come to our land of the free and obtain a monopoly of the chop suey and laundry businesses. But we soon showed them where to head in, or rather where not to head in.

Now to be frank it was only a short time ago that I discovered we had

this yellow peril in the form of the Japanese in our midst. As a matter of fact, the greater part of our three million more or less white residents of California was also in dense ignorance of the fact that we were living over a smouldering volcano. We had had a few slight earthquakes, it is true, but we had never laid them to the Japanese. The first intimation came last winter when it was discovered that one George Shima, the Japanese potato king, had what virtually amounted to a corner on potatoes. Mr. Shima, it was charged, was profiteering. Of course none of his white rivals among the commission men would descend to such tactics. They laid it on to Mr. Shima. At once our little brown brothers suffered a slump in popularity. And then to cap the climax, this spring the Japanese obtained a corner on the strawberries. No more nice berries at one nickel a box. Two for a quarter was the minimum. If it looked like a glut the Japanese would destroy a large quantity of berries and keep the price up. At least that is what they were accused of doing, although it was never proved and the district attorney's office failed to prosecute. The price of everything else had aviated, but Californians demanded their inalienable rights. Strawberries always had been five cents a box. Down with the Japanese for daring to ask more!

Then a few of our enterprising politicians discovered that their fences needed repairing. What better material could be found than the carcasses of the Japanese. They had no vote, so wham! on to them with both feet.

Thus once more the yellow peril was brought to the fore after lying quiescent for a number of years while the Japanese Navy was policing our unprotected Pacific shores during the late unpleasantness and the local Japanese were supplying us with vegetables and fish. Our politicians were too busy then bringing our boys out of Siberia and the yellow press needed its space to apologize for and extenuate the depredations of the Germans.

Agitation against the immigration of the Japanese commenced in California back in 1906 and 1907 when Japanese laborers began coming into the country in such numbers as to constitute a real menace to the laboring men of the country, who at that time were finding it difficult to obtain jobs for themselves.

The matter was taken up with the Federal Government in an attempt to have the immigration laws amended. The government, not wishing to appear to discriminate against the subjects of a powerful and friendly nation, entered into diplomatic negotiations with the Japanese Government and the so-called *gentlemen's agreement* was drawn up. Under its terms the Japanese Government agreed to restrict the issuance of passports to the United States to students, business men and farmers.

After Japanese laborers had been thus excluded the state legislature of California passed a bill in 1913 forbidding Japanese to own agricultural land and limiting leases to a period of three years. This provision, of course, was only applicable to such Japanese as were ineligible to citizenship and did not affect the rights of Japanese born in the United States and therefore citizens per se.

An initiative petition has been prepared which would place a measure upon the ballot next fall that would practically prevent a Japanese from owning or leasing any agricultural land whatever in the state.

This petition is being circulated at the time I am writing this article and I do not know just what success it is having. Men who have leased large tracts to the Japanese have assured me that the proposed law is unconstitutional and that they do not fear it.

California Oriental Exclusion League.

Since the close of the World War the California Oriental Exclusion League and similar organizations have kept up a constant agitation against the Japanese. There was an attempt made by State Senator J. M. Inman, president of the league and one of the most active foes of the Japanese, and others to introduce anti-Japanese legislation at the last session of the legislature. Failing in this a determined attempt was made to induce Governor Stephens to call an extra session to consider such legislation.

Governor Stephens remained deaf to appeals, however, but instead put the State Board of Control to work gathering statistics. These statistics, to which I will refer in detail later, evidently caused the governor to experience a change of heart, for soon after receiving them he indited a letter to Secretary of State Colby asking for Federal aid in solving the problem.

Up to the present the State Department has taken no action upon the governor's letter, but a congressional sub-committee on immigration and naturalization is now out on the coast taking testimony upon the question. This committee will continue its hearings until late in the fall.

This, in brief, is the history of the legislative steps taken against the Japanese up to the present.

After reading the newspaper articles and the statements of some of our senators and other near statesmen, I was prepared to find the citizens of California in a furor of excitement over a new invasion of the Pacific Coast by the Japanese. But careful and thorough investigation found them to be in a remarkable state of calmness, considering the dire predictions daily hurled at them. Perhaps living so close to a peril has inured them to a situation that Californian representative statesmen at Washington view with alarm.

Reliable statistics have been hard to obtain. The figures furnished Governor Stephens by the State Board of Control are perhaps as nearly accurate as any. These have been gathered, I understand, largely from the Japanese consulates and correspond in many respects with figures furnished me by the Japanese themselves. The latter allege, however, that the Board of Control counted all the Japanese coming into the country but failed to allow for those returning to Japan.

No Real Anti-Japanese Feeling.

The Board of Control also included five thousand students at present at college in Japan. These latter are, therefore, not menacing us now, but constitute a reserve menace, as it were.

That the people of California are not stirred to deeds of violence against the Japanese is not the fault of some of the agitators. Their entire appeal is based upon passion and prejudice. Justice and fairness

have no part in their creed. There is also a considerable number of patriotic men who sincerely believe that it is advisable to prevent further increase of the Japanese in this country but are willing to accord to them the undoubtedly excellent qualities that they as a nation possess. These men are not responsible for the fulminations of the yellow press. But there is a certain class of politicians who are ready to stir up race hatred and bring this country to the verge of a war to gratify their own ambitions.

These men are only defeating their own ends. There is no wide-spread sentiment against the Japanese among the laboring class, the class most easily excited to riot. Their feeling as far as I have been able to learn by questioning men of various trades and crafts is largely one of indifference. The Japanese in this state are nearly all farmers. Instead of being in competition with labor they are supplying the laborers with food. Farm labor is so scarce that the small number of Oriental laborers, Japanese, Hindus or Chinese, can not fill the demand.

Farmers Not Against the Japanese.

Neither can I find any strong sentiment against the Japanese among the farmers themselves. There is some bitterness, it is true, evidenced by farmers who have been brought in direct competition with the Japanese, but even in the reports of the hearings before the immigration committee, as printed in the newspapers most strongly opposed to the Japanese, I find nearly as many farmers testifying for the Japanese as against them.

Every banker to whom I have talked has had nothing but good words for the Japanese. Business men generally speak favorably of them and deplore the agitation against them.

The greatest opposition to the Japanese seems to be in the northern part of the state. They have concentrated strongly in certain districts there, and in some cities such as Stockton and Sacramento there seems to be a decidedly bitter feeling.

In Stockton especially, some of the citizens are so opposed to the Japanese that they refused to appear before the immigration committee and testify because the committee had visited the immense ranch of George Shima who reclaimed the river delta lands.

They overlooked the fact that an investigating committee is supposed to investigate both sides of a question. Such prejudice, however, is not common, and there has been a disposition among both those opposed to the Japanese and the Japanese themselves to give the committee all the aid in their power in uncovering the real truth of the situation.

I have lived upon the Pacific Coast for thirty-odd years. During that period I have had considerable dealings with the Japanese, both as a newspaper man and an orange grower. I have known them as house servants, as railroad laborers, as orange pickers, as business men, as farmers, and during my college days as fellow students. I have found them to average just about the same as any other nationality. I have known good ones, bad ones and indifferent ones.

Japanese Comparable to Germans and Swedes.

As desirable immigrants, I would class them with the Germans and Swedes except for the fact that their Asiatic race prevents them from becoming easily assimilated.

They are industrious, thrifty, cleanly and honest. There is no class of immigrants that adopts American customs more quickly than the Japanese. A Chinaman may live in this country for a lifetime but he still clings to the dress and habits of his native land. But from the moment a Japanese lands in this country he begins to pick up our ways. It is this habit of his, in picking up our ways, that has made him unfavorable with the housewives in California. Since he has obtained control of the berry and vegetable markets he has been suspected and, I fear, justly suspected of profiteering. Anyhow he has carried coöperation to the *n*th degree and I'll confess has aroused a feeling of envy among farmers and fruit growers who thought they had a corner on the co-operative principle.

The Japanese are law abiding. As a newspaper reporter I worked around police headquarters in several of the larger northwestern cities and I can not recall ever having seen or heard of a Japanese being booked for theft or burglary. We have had them in for gambling and fighting among themselves and occasionally for intoxication, but they seem to have an innate respect for property rights.

Absurd Complaints Against the Japanese.

I have heard it charged that they are cunning and deceitful and were guilty of sharp practice. In some individual instances I have found this to be true, but no more so than any other race that comes to a foreign country and is made the prey of every sharper and crook. In nearly every instance where it has been charged that the Japanese attempted to take advantage in a business deal I have found that the man who made the complaint had simply been beaten at his own game. The Japanese are shrewd and when they are in doubt they go to a white lawyer. I believe that anyone who deals honestly and fairly with the Japanese will receive the same treatment. At least that has been my own experience with them. Much of the prejudice against them I have found to be due to ignorance and racial distrust. You will find the same feeling against any class of foreigners whose language and customs are different from ours.

Up in the state of Washington the Japanese have been accused of indulging in that noble indoor sport of bootlegging. This may be true. Our liquor laws appeal neither to our foreign-born population nor, it might be added, to a considerable portion of native-born residents. Bootlegging out on the coast is not a business that is monopolized by any particular race. In one of the principal cities of the northwest the mayor and a number of the higher police officials were indicted for complicity in the same sort of an offense. With such examples of citizenship is it small wonder that the Japanese try to break into the game while the getting is good?

Health inspectors have had some trouble with Japanese regarding the covering of perishables on sale at the public markets, and there have been complaints made regarding sanitation at their homes on farms and leased lands. The charge against the stall keepers is undoubtedly true, but the same difficulty has been experienced with other races as well as with native-born American citizens. They dislike to keep their wares covered because it renders them less attractive to the public and this law is evaded whenever possible.

I was surprised, however, to hear that the home surroundings of the Japanese were insanitary. This has been contrary to my experience, as I have always found the Japanese as a race exceptionally cleanly about their persons and surroundings, comparing favorably in this respect with any other class of foreign immigrants. Such farmhouses as I have visited, while rather bare and meagerly furnished, were scrupulously clean.

Alleged Evasion of the Gentlemen's Agreement.

The most serious charge made against the Japanese is that they are violating the so-called *gentlemen's agreement*. In Governor Stephens' letter to Secretary Colby he does not directly charge the Japanese Government with bad faith in this matter, but he leaves it to be inferred that the Japanese officials are not ignorant of what is taking place.

The main basis for the charge is the fact that, if the governor's figures are correct, the Japanese population in California has increased more than one hundred per cent during the past ten years. The 1910 census showed a population of 41,356. The figures gathered by the State Board of Control now show a Japanese population in California of 87,279. Of this number 5,000 are said to be in school in Japan. The Japanese associations, organizations formed by the Japanese to promote the Americanization of the resident Japanese, assert that the Board of Control has overestimated the number of Japanese in California by at least ten thousand. The census figures when released will settle this argument.

The figures compiled by the Board of Control show a total of 20,331 births among the Japanese resident in California during the ten-year period. The Japanese are great admirers of the late Theodore Roosevelt, and evidently took his admonitions respecting the desirability of large families to heart. They find, however, that there is no pleasing their critics and by following the advice of the greatest of Americans they have only succeeded in getting themselves in deeper waters.

The figures of the State Board of Control place the number of Japanese immigrants to this country since 1910 at 25,592. Of these 5,749 are said to be "picture brides."

These so-called picture brides are Japanese women who are betrothed while still in their native country to Japanese men in this country through an exchange of photographs. The scheme was adopted to give the young Japanese in the United States an opportunity to get married to women of their own race. It is patterned after our well-known matrimonial agencies, although it must be said that these marriages turn out much better than those in this country conducted under similar auspices.

The entrance of picture brides has been permitted by our immigration service under the terms of the *gentlemen's agreement,* which allowed a Japanese to obtain a passport "to resume an acquired domicile, to join a parent, wife or child residing in the United States."

Because of complaints against this practice the Japanese Government some six months ago revoked permission for unmarried Japanese women to come to this country. A number of passports issued before the order of revocation are still good but as soon as these are used no more picture brides will be allowed to emigrate, and unmarried Japanese on this side of the water will be compelled to take white brides or wait until the present generation of Japanese girls in this country grows up.

Evasions of the *gentlemen's agreement* charged by Governor Stephens are the bringing in of farm laborers under the guise of farmers and of dependents. Under the terms by which Japanese are permitted to lease land this seems to be a distinction without a difference.

Practically all land cultivated by the Japanese in this state with the exception of a very small portion that is actually owned by the Japanese or their children is leased to them by the white owners who find that they can get more in rentals than they could by working the land themselves. The land is usually subleased by the lessee to a number of his countrymen who either work it on contract or coöperatively. Whether these men are called farmers or farm laborers is largely a matter of terminology.

Another class of what might be called farm laborers is the orange and lemon pickers and pruners employed in the citrus districts of Southern California. Speaking as an orange grower, I will say we were mighty glad to get these Japanese laborers during the war when it was practically impossible to obtain men to pick our fruit and work our orchards. There was nothing said about menaces or yellow perils in those days.

It is also charged that a great many Japanese have been smuggled across the border from Mexico. Influential men among the Japanese admit that some of their countrymen have come into this country in that manner, but they say the number is very small. They tell me that there are very few Japanese in Mexico at the present time, and that those who are there are making just as much money as their countrymen in the United States and therefore have no inducement to drift across the border.

The fact remains, however, that owing to the large stretch of border practically unguarded it is comparatively easy for aliens to pass back and forth. Federal inspectors are constantly on the alert and many who have illegally crossed have been detected and deported.

No Real Menace.

It is difficult for the average citizen to work himself into a frenzy of alarm over the danger of less than 100,000 Japanese crowding out a population of some three million Caucasians, but when the yellow press assures him that these alien residents have acquired control of practically all the good land in the state he begins to sit up and take notice.

Let us see how the facts as contained in the report of the State Board of Control bear out these ominous predictions. The total land area of California is given at 99,617,280 acres. We will eliminate the greater part of this vast territory and only consider the farm lands, of which it is alleged that the Japanese have obtained control. The total acreage of farm lands in the state is 27,931,444 acres.

Of this amount the Japanese own, or are purchasing on contract, 74,769 acres and have under lease from the white owners 383,287 acres, or a total under their control of 458,056 acres. In other words, less than two per cent of the farm lands of California is being farmed by the Japanese and all but 74,769 acres is under three-year leases that may be canceled when terminated, at the owners' option.

Thus it may be seen that the white residents of California still have a fairly good grip on their farm lands, possessing some 27,473,388 acres,

with 383,287 more that they can take away from the Japanese any time the notion strikes them.

It is true that the Japanese have under control some of the best land in the state. A good portion of their farming is devoted to truck gardening, which requires rich land. The Japanese, because of their squat stature and unremitting industry, make ideal truck gardeners. This form of farming does not come naturally to the native American. We are as a race too tall for this back-breaking work, and we haven't the patience that it requires to be a successful gardener on a large scale. The greater portion of garden truck in the United States is raised by our immigrants and of all immigrants the Japanese, because of the qualities I have mentioned, is the most successful.

Ridiculous Charges.

One of the most ridiculous arguments against the Japanese is the charge that they exhaust the soil on leased lands. Anyone who knows anything at all about gardening knows that to be profitable it requires constant and most heavy fertilization. Even if the leasors of the land were so lacking in business acumen as to allow their land to be depleted it would not pay the Japanese themselves. One reason that barnyard manures are so scarce and high is the demand for them from the Japanese truck gardeners. The Japanese are also heavy users of commercial fertilizers, especially fish scraps, the value of which they were among the first to recognize.

An argument which their opponents in California use among the workingmen to excite prejudice against the Japanese is that they work long hours and on Sundays. Both these statements are facts. Show me a successful farmer, white, black or yellow, who does not work long hours. Nature is not constructed on an eight-hour schedule. The farmer must make hay while the sun shines. Even the proletarian government of Russia recognizes that fact.

The Japanese themselves were the first to recognize the fact that unless they wished to become extremely unpopular with the working classes in this country they would be compelled to demand higher wages and work shorter hours than they had been accustomed to in their own country.

The first immigrants to come to this country were employed on the railroads as section-hands and in other forms of labor where gangs could be employed. Students coming to the United States took positions as domestic servants in order more quickly to learn our language and customs. The Japanese are proud, but they have none of that quality, only too common among our younger generation, known as false pride. Their philosophy has long embraced the Christian principle of service.

The agitation in 1906 and 1907 that led to the adoption of the *gentlemen's agreement* convinced the Japanese that they were adopting the wrong method by attempting to compete with American labor. They, therefore, sought for undeveloped fields of industry where they would not incur disfavor. They found this in farming and fishing.

Japanese Farmers in Northern California.

There are five well-defined districts in California where the Japanese have gained some ascendency in farming over the white population.

The first district is in the northern part of the state in Glenn, Colusa and Butte counties. This is the great rice-growing district of the state and it is to the Japanese that the credit should go for developing this great industry of the Sacramento Valley. They were not the first to try rice growing in California, but it is undisputed that they were the first to make it a commercial success.

These rice fields have been developed from practically worthless land that would not bring an average of ten dollars an acre. Now, thanks to the perserverance of the Japanese who stuck to the growing of rice in the face of yearly losses, this land is now worth $100 an acre and rents from $35 to $45 an acre a year. The Japanese claim no credit for superior skill in growing rice, but admit that they owe their success to following the methods advised by the United States Government experimental stations. Encouraged by the success of the Japanese the white farmers again took up rice growing, after having practically abandoned the field to the Orientals, and now outnumber them, having 107,000 acres to the Japanese 33,000.

This is what has occurred in practically every branch of farming industry in which the Japanese have assumed a dominating position. They have taken up industries and land abandoned by the white population and made a success of them. It is these very men who have failed where the Japanese have succeeded who are making the biggest outcry against them.

The second district where the Japanese have obtained a strong foothold is in sections of San Joaquin, Sacramento, Solano, Yolo, Sutter and Placer counties, where they raise asparagus, vegetables, fruits, and grapes. There they have reclaimed thousands of acres along the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers from swamp and tule beds and have converted great stretches of semi-desert land where nothing was raised except scant crops of hay into orchard and garden areas.

The third district occupied by the Japanese to some extent is in Fresno, Kings and Tulare counties. Here they took what was considered practically worthless clay lands and made them into the richest vineyards of the state. They planted vineyards and orchards in pure sand and made them bear and they extended the citrus district north into Tulare County, changing sheep pasture into land worth a thousand dollars an acre.

Japanese Farmers in Southern California.

The fourth district, in Los Angeles and Orange counties, was already developed, especially the citrus districts, where the Japanese have never been able to obtain a foothold. Thy have rendered invaluable service here, however, as pickers and pruners in the orange groves, sharing the bulk of this work with the Mexicans and a scattering of Hindus. It is as truck gardeners that they have prospered in Los Angeles County, where they keep the city of Los Angeles supplied with fresh garden truck the year round. Even in this industry there has been no tendency to crowd out the white farmers. Out of the 418,998 acres of land under cultivation in Los Angeles County the Japanese have under lease only 40,000 acres and own but a scant 2,500 acres. The fact that they produce more

than the white farmers is because they farm more intensively, not because they own more land.

The fifth district occupied to some extent by Japanese is in Imperial County, where they have braved the intense heat of the Imperial Valley and gone extensively into the raising of cantaloupes and vegetables. Here they have also to a great extent pioneered. The white owners of the land, unable to get labor who could stand the heat of the valley, have been glad to lease their lands at large rentals to the Japanese.

What the Japanese Farmers Produce.

Last year, 1919, the cry was underproduction. This was given as the main reason for the well-known high cost of living. "Our workers are slacking on their jobs" was the universal complaint. Let us see what these Japanese whom we would now unceremoniously boot out of California did for us in the line of production. The total value of the food products raised by them in California is given at $67,145,730.

This sum was divided among the following products:

Berries, $3,629,400; celery, $1,105,400; asparagus, $1,804,860; seeds and nursery stock, $3,369,400; onions, $3,459,050; tomatoes, $1,068,660; sugar beets, $4,800,360; cantaloupes, $2,822,150; green vegetables, $10,997,000; potatoes, $5,298,900; hops, $743,400; grapes, $8,136,900; beans, $2,525,000; fruits and nuts, $8,457,400; hay, grain and corn, $2,611,100; rice, $3,600,000; cotton, $1,950,000; miscellaneous products, $766,750.

In California the cost of living, especially in food products has always ranged considerably lower than in eastern states, largely because green vegetables and garden truck have been obtainable the year round. How much of this we owe to the Japanese the table plainly reveals.

The Pot and the Kettle.

These politicians who now profess such great solicitude for the California farmers and wish to protect them from the deadly Japanese were being fed during the war by these same Japanese whom, by means of the anti-leasing law, they wish to exclude from the soil altogether. They argue that if the Japanese had not been here then the lands would have been occupied by the white farmers, but this leads to the natural question, What were the white farmers doing that they let the Japanese get in on the land? This land was available here in California to the white farmer fifty years before the Japanese ever thought of coming to America.

Some of these same politicians who are now holding up their hands in holy horror, because Japan is hankering after a slice of China and Korea and is sending over a few thousands of her best citizens to California to teach us those doctrines of thrift and industry which Benjamin Franklin preached when our nation was born, are the very ones who have been urging the government to send our soldiers—these same "our boys" over whom they shed crocodile tears when they were sent to Siberia—to clean up Mexico. Of course, this was for Mexico's own good, but the Japanese say the same thing about China. I am not defending Japan's course with China. I sincerely hope that the other nations will bring her to see the error of her ways, but why should the pot call the kettle black?

We must not forget that Japan was isolated for centuries and was perfectly content in that isolation until we sent a fleet over there and awoke her. The Japanese have proved to be good imitators and in their national policy they have only imitated the so-called civilized nations of the world whose motto has ever been "to git while the gittin' was good."

Japanese Fishing.

Another charge made against the Japanese is that they have gained a monopoly of the fishing industry off the coast of California. Taking the records of the state game and fish commission we find that in 1919-20 there are 1,316 Japanese engaged as fishermen out of a total of all nationalities of 4,671, or twenty-eight per cent. The number of fishing boats operated by them is given as 355 against a total of 796 engaged in the industry.

There are several arguments advanced against allowing the Japanese to engage in the fishing industry, but the only two worthy of serious consideration are whether it is wise to allow an alien race to obtain control of an important food supply, and whether in case of war these aliens would not be able to furnish valuable information to an enemy.

As to the first contention, I can see nothing more serious than perhaps some inconvenience for a time should difficulty arise with the Japanese fishermen. The sea is open to all and fishing is not such a difficult vocation nor Americans so helpless that they could not take over the fishing fleet and operate it successfully should necessity arise.

It may be said also to the credit of the Japanese fishermen that they are more law-abiding and live up to the fishing regulations better than the other aliens engaged in that industry off the coast of California.

Just the other day the yellow press came out with big headlines accusing the Japanese of violating the fishing laws in regard to the three-mile limit and asserted that they were openly defying the authorities and had fired on the wardens. As a matter of fact it was not the Japanese fishermen at all, but Austrians who were rebelling against the government, and instead of breaking the rules the Japanese were actually assisting in enforcing them. Most of the other newspapers acknowledged their mistake, but if the yellow press showed any tendency to set the public right I failed to notice it.

Unfairness of California Papers.

I have noticed this unfairness in nearly all California papers, especially in the reports of the hearings before the immigration committee.

They have universally adopted the old trick of playing up in the headlines all testimony unfavorable to the Japanese while burying in the body of the article the testimony in their favor. In publishing the report of the Board of Control they selected and played up only the facts that militated against the Japanese, although the report comprehensively embraced a mass of testimony in their favor. Such a course when pursued by practically every newspaper in the state is bound to arouse prejudice and racial feeling against the Japanese, especially among those who have no personal acquaintance among them.

The argument against the Japanese being allowed to learn the secrets of coast defense is a valid one, but it should not apply to the Japanese

alone. There are nearly two thousand other aliens engaged in fishing off the coast of California, including Italians, Austrians, Germans, Portuguese, Spaniards, Greeks, Danes, Chinese, Swedes, Norwegians, Finns, English, Russians, Canadians, French, and Mexicans. American fishermen number only a few over a thousand.

I do not believe that anyone except American citizens should be allowed in coastwise trade or fishing. The experience of England has shown us the value of these boats for patrol duty and they should be manned by sailors who can be depended upon to do their duty by their country.

Japanese Stock in Land-Owning Corporations.

The Japanese are charged, and justly so, with evading the statute designed to prevent them from owning land. They do this with the assistance of white lawyers who aid them in forming corporations of which there are now some four hundred in the state.

To comply with the law the majority of the stock in these corporations is issued in the name of an American citizen or citizens who act as trustees, although the business of the corporations is really transacted by the aliens. Lately it has been a favorite device of the Japanese to issue this controlling stock to his American-born children and then act as their guardian. The courts have recently taken judicial notice of these practices and have refused to sanction them.

These practices are undoubtedly plain evasions of the law and most reprehensible, but it must be remembered that they could not occur without the connivance of American lawyers. When one notes the daily formation of blue-sky corporations organized by Americans for no other purpose than to fleece the public, he finds it hard to censure the Japanese for attempting to form corporations for the pursuit of legitimate business.

Japanese Business Honesty.

The charge often made denying the honesty of the Japanese in business transactions is disproved by the fact that their operations are much more readily financed by the banks than those of white men and citizens conducting similar businesses. This is admitted by the anti-Japanese agitators themselves, and is used by them as an argument against the Japanese.

All business men know how hard it is for a man with a shady reputation to obtain credit or money from business houses and banks, yet the Japanese have no difficulty in obtaining either and they number the bankers and financiers as among their best friends.

On page 79 of the report of the State Board of Control there is the following paragraph:

"Farm advisers and others complain that American farmers, lessees and intended growers are not so liberally financed by the interests above mentioned (commission houses, canneries, packers, beet sugar factories, bankers, etc.) as are the Orientals, especially the Japanese. Difficulty in securing funds for working capital is eliminating the Americans from competition with the Japanese."

This is a sad commentary upon the thrift, industry, initiative and honesty of the Americans who are competing with the Japanese. Banks

and business houses are not conducting operations for their health. They loan money or extend credit only to those who they have reason to believe will make good.

The Way to Settle This Trouble.

So much for the economic situation regarding the Japanese in California. There is not the slightest doubt in the mind of any thinking person that unrestricted immigration of the Japanese or any other foreign race would create a serious situation in this country. But that such a situation should arise under the workings of the present treaty with Japan would require a most pessimistic imagination. That there have been abuses of this treaty is undeniably true, but they have been abuses by individual Japanese and not by the government. The government of Japan can not guarantee the honor of all of its citizens any more than could the government of the United States. Most Japanese in the United States are just as desirous of correcting these abuses as we are and there is no doubt in my mind that they will be corrected if handled through diplomatic channels.

Matters certainly can never be amicably or satisfactorily adjusted if the bellicose, unfair and unequitable methods pursued by many of the anti-Japanese agitators in this state are continued. I have too much faith in the genius and energy of the American people to be willing to believe that they can be crowded out of any industry in which they really wish to attain success. The Japanese themselves recognized the fact that they had no chance for competition in anything but certain lines where there was opportunity for all, and Americans had not chosen to avail themselves of the opportunity. I have failed to find one American farmer in California who has suffered from the competition of the Japanese, but I have found a number who have failed through their own lack of foresight or industry and then blamed it upon the Japanese. And another thing, disabuse your mind of any idea that all the Japanese are successful. They have just as large a proportion of failures as our native farmers. Mr. Sho Inouye, president of the Japanese *Daily News,* of Los Angeles, who has since become wealthy in the importing business, told me that he made a flat failure when he tried farming and nearly went broke in the Imperial Valley. Not all Japanese are successful farmers, business men or fishermen.

No Fear of Japanese Monopoly.

No one hundred thousand nor five hundred thousand Japanese are going to monopolize any industry in this state unless our citizens are willing that they do so. The argument of lower standards of living falls flat before the fact, which opponents of the Japanese themselves admit, that the Japanese demand and get higher wages than other classes of labor in the same field. The average Japanese may live on simpler food than the American, but when it comes to other things he insists on the best. There is no more liberal spender than a Japanese youth.

Like practically all foreigners, it takes only a few years of life in America to raise their standard of living to a point equal to if not in excess of that maintained by native Americans. Compare the meals of the average prosperous immigrant, for instance, with the table set by our

frugal New Englanders or a certain class of farmers in the Middle West and South. This standard of living bugaboo is all a myth. Men, whether Oriental or Occidental, acquire material comforts just as rapidly as their purse will permit them.

The Japanese immigrants who have come to this country are young men who come here because they think they can better their condition. You may rest assured that they are not going backward but forward, and this applies to spiritual as well as material things. It is a mighty poor brand of civilization that America teaches if it will fall before the Oriental idea. The Japanese are an intensely practical people and they are not only adopting our customs and habits, but are gradually absorbing our idealistic philosophy, a philosophy whose idealism we endeavor to hide even from ourselves. But they recognize it as a practical philosophy and as such it appeals to them. If at any time in the past they were disposed to emulate the German idea of *kultur* that time has now passed, because Germany has made a failure while, on the other hand, we are left the most powerful nation on the globe. No race as intelligent as the Japanese is going to imitate a failure. The military caste that once ruled Japan is daily losing its grip and, it might be added, no small part of its slipping is due to the missionary work of Californian Japanese.

Naturalize the Japanese.

Granting that it would not be wise or practicable to add materially to the Japanese population now in California, the question arises as to what we are going to do with those already here. The position of a Japanese in this country is an anomalous one. We deny him the right of citizenship, and then point to him as a menace because he is still a subject of the mikado. Some day we are going to have a number of Japanese citizens who are native-born. There are 21,611 minor children of Japanese in California today with 5,000 more attending universities in Japan. These children become citizens of this country when of age, unless they renounce allegiance.

Much ado is being made over the fact that the Japanese Government considers the children of its subjects, although born in a foreign country, still to be subject to the nation of their parents. So do other foreign countries, and for that matter a child of a citizen of the United States does not lose his citizenship because he is born abroad.

These Japanese children plainly have the right to expatriate themselves. Section Two of Part A of the Japanese Law of Expatriation states, "When a Japanese subject obtains of his or her own accord the right of citizenship or subjectship of a foreign nation, he or she is expatriated."

Thus it can be seen that if the parents of these American-born children were allowed to become citizens it would not even be necessary for these children to expatriate themselves. I have not talked to one Japanese in this country who professed a desire ever to reside permanently again in Japan. They like our climate, our way of living and doing business, and they are willing to adopt our form of government and become loyal citizens.

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After a careful study of the question based upon personal knowledge and facts compiled from reliable sources, I have reached the conclusion that there is only one serious obstacle to Japanese immigration—that is the matter of assimilation. A small leaven of unassimilated Japanese can do no harm to this country; in fact, they can be of distinct benefit, but they never could be allowed to come here in the numbers permitted persons of the Caucasian race. We are evolving a new race in this country, but in this great melting pot Asiatics and Negroes will not fuse.

The Remedy.

There is, in my opinion, a very simple remedy for the so-called Japanese problem in California. I believe that those Japanese who are now here should be granted citizenship if they wish it. Otherwise they should be deported. We want no aliens in this country, with the exception of visitors and students, who do not intend to remain as loyal citizens.

The question of further immigration should be settled through diplomatic channels. The present agreement, salving as it does the Japanese pride, is all right but it needs some amending. The burden of proof, if a Japanese is caught illegally in this country, is now upon the government. It should be the other way. The Japanese should be compelled to prove their right to be here, as the Chinese are.

Any Japanese lawfully in this country who assists in smuggling or concealing smuggled Japanese should be deported. Test of the sincerity of the Japanese Government could be made easily by the suggestion of these two measures by our State Department. The incorporation of them into the treaty would stop effectually the illegal entry of Japanese into this country.

The enactment of the initiative petition, now being circulated, into law which would prohibit the leasing of land to Japanese would, in my judgment, be an unwise move on the part of the citizens of California.

In the first place it would serve no purpose except to inflame public sentiment in Japan against the United States and make it harder for the State Department to make an amicable adjustment of the present difficulties. The law, even if passed, in accordance with Governor Stephens' own admission in his letter to Secretary Colby, would not affect the Japanese control of agricultural holdings, as it could easily be evaded through personal employment contracts.

There never was a time in the history of our nation when it was more desirable that we remain on terms of peace and friendship with other nations than the present, when we have so many pressing economic questions to settle. It would be nothing short of a crime if we should be brought into conflict with Japan through the mouthings of a few self-seeking politicians and yellow newspapers over a matter that could be settled in a few hours' friendly conference between level-headed representatives of both nations.